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1. PRESS SECRETARY OF MINISTRY OF INTERIOR LAST NIGHT (FEB 3) RELEASED LIST OF APPROXIMATELY 700 PERSONS DETAINED IN FEDERAL DISTRICT PRISON U-2 (DEVOTO) UNDER EXECUTIVE STATE OF SEIGE POWER (PEN). ALSO PUBLISHED LIST OF ONE PERSON PLACED UNDER PEN, SEVEN RELEASED FROM PEN, AND EIGHT GRANTED PERMISSION TO LEAVE COUNTRY. PRESS DID NOT AGREE ON EXACT NUMBER; LA NACION SAID 702, NOTICIAS ARGENTINA SAID 705, AND LA OPINION USED THE FIGURE OF 730. AS DEVOTO IS WOMENS PRISON, ABOUT 675 NAMES WERE WOMEN, REMAINDER WERE MEN. FORM IN WHICH NAMES ARE LISTED MAKES EXACT COUNT DIFFICULT.

2. AMONG THOSE RELEASED FROM PEN WAS ABLEARDO ARCE, FORMER CGT LEADER. MARTA ALICIA PANERO, US DUAL NATIONAL WAS AUTHORIZED TO DEPART COUNTRY. (HER SISTER WAS AUTHORIZED TO DEPART THE COUNTRY IN A LIST PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER. APPARENTLY BOTH ARE STILL CONFINED TO DEVOTO, SINCE BOTH NAMES APPEARED ON THE LIST OF 675 WOMEN DETAINED THERE AS OF JAN 25.) ALSO ON THE LIST OF THOSE DETAINED IN DEVOTO WAS LUCIANA VOGELER.

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3. MINISTRY STATEMENT HEAVILY STRESSED THAT PUBLICATION OF LIST OF DETAINEES WAS BEGINNING OF PROCESS SPECIFICALLY DISPOSED BY PRESIDENT VIDELA, AND FULFILLS PROMISE MADE AT TIME OF RELEASE OF

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389 PERSONS RELEASED FROM PEN IN DECEMBER.

4. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. COMMENT: STORY SEEMS TO HAVE
BROKEN LATE, AS ONLY LA OPINION CARRIES MORE THAN LISTS AND TEXTS
OF ANNOUNCEMENTS. OPINION STORY IS INTERESTING, HOWEVER, IN STRESS
IT GIVES TO PRESIDENT VIDELA'S PERSONAL INITIATIVE IN PUBLICATION OF
LISTS OF PRISONERS AND IN ACTIVATING RIGHT OF OPTION PROCESS.
STATES THEY ARE EVENTS WHICH FLOW DIRECTLY FROM HIS STRATEGY ADOPTED
AFTER HIS VISIT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN SEPTEMBER 1977. CONFIRMS
THAT ADVISORY BOARD TO START PROCESSING FIRST FIFTY CASES UNDER
REVISED RIGHT OF OPTION PROGRAM HAS BEEN APPOINTED, AND WILL START
ISSUING RECOMMENDATIONS. CITES OSTENSIBLY FAVORABLE STATEMENTS
ABOUT TREND OF HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVANCE IN ARGENTINA MADE RECENTLY
BY VISITING RETIRED
FRENCH ADMIRAL, VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR, AND U.S. AMBASSADOR CASTRO.
WHILE WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FIRST TWO SAID, STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED
TO AMBASSADOR CASTRO WAS FUNDAMENTALLY DISTORTED.

5. WE WERE TOLD BY A NUMBER OF SOURCES THAT THESE MEASURES WERE
GOING TO BE ANNOUNCED, BUT REPEATED DELAYS NURTURED SKEPTICISM.
STYLE OF PRESENTATION COULD HAVE BEEN VIDELA EFFORT TO ASSURE
THAT MASSERA DOES NOT STEAL HIS THUNDER AS CHAMPION OF HUMAN RIGHTS,
BUT THAT IS NOT NECESSARILY A DETERMINING FACTOR. THIS WAS PROBABLY
THE EASIEST LIST TO PUBLISH, IN THAT FEW DANGEROUS CRIMINALS OR
SUSPECTS ARE IN DEVOTO, AND FROM OUR RAPID READING OF IT, NO
PERSONS WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY AMONG THE DISAPPEARED HAVE
MIRACULOUSLY REAPPEARED. IT IS, HOWEVER, A SIGNIFICANT MOVE
IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION.
CASTRO

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